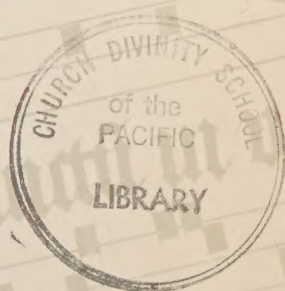


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Studies in Sacred Chant and Liturgy

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Bulletin of the School of Solesmes

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May 18, 1955

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***THE CHANTS OF THE MASS IN THE EIGHTH AND NINTH CENTURIES**

by Dom Jacques Froger, monk of Solesmes

We talk a great deal these days about liturgical reforms. The liturgy is not, to be sure, a totally unchangeable thing. The Prayer of the Church, prayer of all the faithful, it should adapt itself ceaselessly to the spiritual needs of Christians, to their tastes, to their aspirations. Then, too, when the need arises, the Church modifies one or another of the laws which control the sacred ceremonies. In these reforms, or better, in these adaptations of the liturgy, it is of great importance to make these innovations only in the light of past modifications and, while altering the "letter", to preserve intact the spirit of our ancestors in the Faith.

Thus does it seem essential that one should not proceed to the renovation of the liturgy, when it is decidedly necessary to do this, before having studied its history carefully. Only the most direct contact with the antique forms of the liturgy can restore to us the spirit which coursed through it in olden times. Moreover, the study of the past will perhaps make it unnecessary for us to invent, for the future, new rites or ceremonies. If present needs find their full satisfaction in the ancient practices now fallen into disuse, why not simply borrow from Christian antiquity these ancient customs which would only have to be restored to use? Such a method presents the advantage of maintaining the line of continuity between the faithful of ancient times and the faithful of today, and we are sure, by this sort of conservative innovation, of remaining within the true traditional Christian spirit.

This method of recourse to antiquity is without doubt the most prudent as well as the most promising. This is what Pope Pius X utilized to raise up sacred chant from the

*To be published in installments.

decadence into which it had fallen. Instead of replacing it with new melodies, he simply called for its restoration in its original purity, convinced that it was enough, to meet the needs of modern piety, to return to the well-spring of ancient beauty and prayer.

It is this very same method which we are now concerned with applying to the chants of the Mass. Quite recently the Sacred Congregation of Rites expressed a wish to make the rubrics which govern the chant of the Introit more flexible, in order to effect a more intimate relationship between the chant and the ceremony. The Decree leaves to the Ordinaries, in the practical realization, a certain margin of personal initiative. Thus it is permissible for liturgists to search among all the possible solutions for those which best correspond to the spirit and practice of the ancient Christians. Let us consult antiquity, and let us try to determine the way in which people in those days solved the problems which concern us now. In order to understand more thoroughly the lessons of the past, we shall enlarge our horizon to some extent, and instead of limiting ourselves to the Introit alone, we shall study the chants of the Mass in their ensemble.

Our Mass is the Roman Mass. Thus it is most fitting to turn our attention to the ancient Roman liturgy in preference to the other rites, however interesting these latter may have been. The period to which this study will be dedicated, the eighth and ninth centuries, is that which is sometimes called, for good reason, the golden age of the liturgy. It is the time during which the Roman liturgy reached its height, so to speak. It had been carried to a very high degree of perfection by the successive "reforms" of a whole series of great Popes, among whom we could mention Saint Damasus, Saint Gregory the Great, Pope Sergius and Gregory the Third. The Roman Mass of the eighth century thus reflects the Christian concept of several great saints and Popes. It passes on to us a spiritual heritage which it is important to amass with utmost care.

A liturgy which such great men had elaborated over the course of several centuries could not be — and this is readily

understandable — something rudimentary. On the contrary, the period which we are considering presents an ensemble of very complex and very developed rites. The Papal Mass which our sources describe for us is a grandiose ceremony in which a number of ministers, bishops, priests, deacons, sub-deacons, acolytes participated, not to mention lesser clerics. The ornaments and the liturgical furnishings were rich and varied. The edifices of the cult were Basilicas of vast dimensions, and the attendance, certainly very large, was arranged in a system of several categories: the clerics around the altar, the “Defenders” or ecclesiastical dignitaries in a place of honor, and then the great mass of the congregation, men on one side, the women on the other. The chants were sung by trained soloists and by a choir or “schola” organized in a hierarchal manner. It included seven men and a group of children. Among these seven men, three are dignitaries and have the titles of “first”, “second” and “third” (cantors) of the schola. The other four are “paraphonists” and the first among them received the title of “archparaphonist”, or “fourth” of the schola. At the moment the chants were to be sung, the schola took a place before the altar in two groups: “the paraphonists on either flank on the outside, and the children on each side, too, at the interior”, says the *Ordo romanus primus*. Let us visualize the two groups of children in one or more rows which are face-to-face, or in any case arranged with a space between them. Behind each group of children, or in any case on the outside in relationship with the central aisle, two paraphonists. Our texts do not tell us whether the “first”, the “second” and the “third” of the schola had a determined position. The cantors who formed the schola were clerics; the three principals and the paraphonists appear to have been sub-deacons, and the children were lesser clerics, for “cantor” and “psalmist” were, in olden times, real minor orders just as the porter or reader.

The pontifical mass of the eighth and ninth centuries was thus in no way “primitive”, having none of that defaced and disorderly character that too many of our “young scholars” today attribute so unquestioningly to antiquity as a mark of vigor and life. At this time which concerns us, however, the

liturgy had not yet received the somewhat superficial additions with which the middle ages were to encrust it. The eighth century is, then, from the point of view of the complexity of the rites, a privileged epoch and truly a golden age in which abundance had not yet degenerated into a plethora.

Lastly — and this final advantage is by no means negligible — the eighth century is just that time at which the documents which inform us about the Roman liturgy become abundant and permit us to reconstruct it with considerable precision and certainty.

The Documents

From the eighth century on, the Roman liturgy which had already spread into various churches of western Europe, began to put down its roots in a decisive manner in the Frankish countries. King Pepin seems to have given the impulse to this movement. Liturgical conformity with Rome was one of the factors of his political agreement with the Holy See. It is to this romanization of the Frankish nations that we owe the greater part of the books which tell us about the Roman liturgy. These are copies or adaptations of Roman books, no doubt drawn up elsewhere than in Rome itself, or in any case for the use of non-Roman countries.

Among the more interesting of these texts, from what is now our point of view, are those which are called the ‘*Ordines romani*’. An *Ordo romanus* is a sort of description of the Roman Mass, and in particular of the Papal Mass. It is something similar to the rubrics entitled ‘*Ritus servandus in celebratione missae*’ which today are found at the beginning of our missals. The form of the *ordines* is simply much less technical and rather resembles more an account which one of the members of the congregation might give. The oldest of these documents is that whose author has been designated since the eighteenth century as *Anonymous of Gerbert*’, because Gerbert, abbot of the German monastery of Saint Blaise, published it for the first time¹. More re-

1. Gerbert, *Monumenta veteris liturgiae alemannicae*, tome 2 (Saint Blaise, 1779). p. 168 sq.

cently, Silva-Tarouca sought to identify this mysterious anonymous¹, and believed him recognizable as the archcantor John, a Roman monk whom Saint Benedict Biscop had taken with him to England toward the end of the seventh century to teach the Roman chant to the monks of his country. Nevertheless, this identification does not seem tenable, nor does the date proposed. The unknown author of this "*Ordo romanus*" actually wrote during the first half of the eighth century, between the year 700 and 730 or thereabouts.²

The work attributed to this Anonymous includes several writings which, to tell the truth, are perhaps not all by the same author, but which are very closely related to each other and which can be reasonably considered as forming a unit. The only ones which interest us here are the *Capitulare ecclesiastici ordinis* which describes the Papal Mass, the *Breviarum ecclesiastici ordinis* which summarizes the *Capitulare* in adapting it to a monastery, and the *Instructio ecclesiastici ordinis* which describes the romano-Benedictine rite of the monasteries of Rome.

Even in rejecting the identification proposed by Silva-Tarouca, this group of texts remains the oldest of the *ordines romani*, for the one which comes immediately after it, and to which the traditional title of "*Ordo romanus primus*" is given, represents the state of the Roman liturgy in the second half of the eighth century.³

Besides, Duchesne has published in an appendix to his *Origines du culte chretien* an *Ordo* which he took from a

1. Silva-Tarouca, Giovanni "archicantor" di S. Pietro a Roma e l' "*Ordo romanus*" da lui composto (anno 680), in *Atti della Pontificia Accademia romana di archeologia (Serie III) Memorie*, vol. I, parte I, p. 159. The study by Silva-Tarouca is followed by a critical edition (p. 194) of the different items which make up this "*Ordo romanus*".
2. It is impossible to discuss this problem here, as it would make a subject for a special study.
3. The manuscript tradition of the *Ordo romanus primus* seems to be very complicated. One of the recensions, contained in MS. St.-Gall 614 has been noted by Andrieu as representing at least in part an archaic state of the *Ordo romanus primus*. Cf. Andrieu, *Note sur une ancienne redaction de l'Ordo romanus primus* in *Rev. des Sciences rel.* I (1921), p. 385. Pending the critical edition of the *Ordines romani* announced by Mr. Andrieu, we shall use the Stapper edition (Monasterii 1933) which reproduces the MS. Wolfenbuttel 4175 from the ninth century.

manuscript of Saint-Amand. It is called, because of the origin of the manuscript, the *Ordo of Saint-Amand*, and it represents the condition of the liturgy in the ninth century.

These three *Ordines romani* — the Anonymous of Gerbert, the *Ordo primus* and the *Ordo* of Saint Amand — give us the description of the Papal Mass at three successive times relatively close to each other.

We also find some information on the chants of the Mass in the Roman Sacramentary. The Sacramentary, as is well known, is the book intended for the Pontiff alone, and contains only the texts said by him, the Prayers and the Canon (including the Preface, of course). We find in it, then, no piece of chant. But some rubrics give information which it is not without profit to draw upon. We shall thus make reference sometimes to the so-called Sacramentary of Padua (thus named after the town from which the manuscript comes) which represents the state of the Roman rite under Pope Gregory III (731-741)¹.

It is just this liturgy of this same period which is reflected for us in the oldest manuscripts of the Antiphonary of the Mass, published by Dom Hesbert under the form of "*Sextuplex*"². These manuscripts, of course, give us only the pieces of the chant.

Another liturgical book used once was the "*Cantatorium*", a collection of the pieces sung at the ambon by the cantor. The oldest example which has come down to us dates only from the end of the ninth century or the beginning of the tenth.³ It does not, therefore, belong wholly to the time we are studying; we can, however, use it as an interesting bit of evidence to the extent that from our present point of view this *Cantatorium* of the ninth to tenth centuries does

1. The Sacramentary of Padua is edited by D. Mohlberg, *Die älteste erreichbare Gestalt des Lib. Sac. anni circuli der röm. Kirche* (Munster, 1927; *Liturgiegesch. Quellen*, H. 11-12). The other Roman Sacramentaries do not contain anything worth pointing out.

2. D. Hesbert, *Antiphonale missarum sextuplex* (Brussels, Vromant, 1935)

3. This is MS. St. -Gall 359, published in photographic facsimile in the *Paleographie Musicale*, second series, volume II. (Tournai, Desclée, 1924)

not seem to differ from that which the Roman cantors of the eighth century used, since it contains the same pieces of chant.

Such are the principal documents which will permit us to reconstruct the chants of the Roman Mass in the eighth and ninth centuries.

Here, for greater clarity, is the list of the documents which will serve us together with the abbreviation which will be used to designate them in the course of this study:

CAPITULARE	— <i>Capitulare ecclésiastici ordinis</i>
BREVIARUM	— <i>Breviarum ecclesiastici ordinis</i>
ISTRUCCIO	— <i>Instruccio ecclesiastici ordinis</i>
These three different pieces which make up the oldest <i>Ordo romanus</i> (beginning of the eighth century) are cited according to the edition of Silva-Tarouca.	
ORDO ROMANUS I	— <i>Ordo romanus primus</i> (second half of the eighth century), ed. Stapper.
S. AMAND	— <i>Ordo</i> of St. Amand (ninth century) according to Duchesne, <i>Origines</i> , Appendix.
PADUA	— <i>Sacramentary</i> of Padua (about 730) Mohlberg edition.
SEXTUPLEX	— <i>Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex</i> (about 730) edited by Hesbert.
CANTATORIUM OF ST.-GALL	— MS. St.-Gall 359 (IX-X cent.) edition of the <i>Paleographie Musicale</i> .

It is not a question here of retracing the history of the chants of the Mass. We shall overlook for the moment the question of origins, and we shall not even try to cast light on the minute evolutions which could have left their traces in the

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texts which serve us as sources. Intentionally overlooking the details of lesser importance, we shall simply attempt to describe the chants of the Mass at a certain point in time. The substantial accord of all our documents and their relative proximity in time justifies us, it would seem, in using them to draw up a sort of static chart. Let us then study the Roman Mass in considering the various ceremonies in the order they follow in the course of the Mass. To conclude, it will suffice to glance back over the mass of information collected in the course of our study and to formulate the practical lessons which arise from them.

(to be continued)

*THE MUSICAL TEACHING OF SOLESMES AND CHRISTIAN PRAYER

by Maurice Blanc

CHAPTER III
DOM ANDRE MOCQUEREAU

I

La Paleographie Musicale

In the light of the favor of Louis XIII, and the care the Pope had taken to congratulate the students of the French Seminary for having "restored to its primitive purity" the chant of St. Gregory, all this applause was more than the expression of the strong aesthetic pleasure felt by a music-lover when hearing a carefully trained choir. Other choral groups would have been as deserving of praise although singing from books other than those of Solesmes. At Arezzo the members of the congress had been unanimous in praising the mass chants according to the Ratisbonne Gradual, sung by a number of well chosen voices under the direction of Haberl. Certainly the growing favor of better informed persons was given to the beauty and purity of style of the Benedictine chant, but these votes would not have been enough to bring success had there not been a new arm then on the field of battle, an arm which would be decisive.

In the eyes of the *Univers* correspondent, the hero of the centenary celebrations of St. Gregory had been Dom Andre Mocquereau, the companion assigned to Dom Pothier by the abbot of Solesmes. Dom Mocquereau was the anonymous director of the *Paleographie Musicale*, a monumental

*This is the third of a series of articles which will reproduce in an English translation the unique book of Father Blanc, *L'Enseignement Musical de Solesmes et la Priere Chretienne.*"

publication the fascicles of which, printed on the Solesmes press, were already winning general admiration.

The matter had not been easily settled. What Dom Mocquereau (who entered Solesmes in 1875 and became the attentive and laborious disciple of Dom Pothier) wanted was exactly what his master did not want. Why this conflict? What we have written up to now ought to be enough to explain it. Dom Joseph Pothier was then one of the most warmly talked about men both in France and elsewhere, among the clergy and educated Catholics. This monk, who twenty-five years earlier had entered Solesmes to seek a life consecrated to God in the peace of the cloister, was now an object of scandal in the Church of God. True, Leo XIII in person deigned to congratulate and encourage him publicly when the abbey dedicated its *Liber Gradualis* to the Sovereign Pontiff, but immediately the Pope had to take back his brief to give the humble monk a no less public admonition. Around him, religious, priests, even bishops, declared themselves partisans of his method and his gradual; now they rallied to the edition recommended by the Holy See. However the flood of brochures and disputes could not be stopped.

Doubtless Rome allowed him to pursue his scholarly work, but why not do it quietly? Since the monastery had dedicated itself to profound, expensive research in the realm of musical paleography, would it not be more suitable that it keep all this for itself? A sensational publication would only provoke new outcries that would displease the prefect of the Sacred Congregation. Then too would it not all end in more confusion among theorists (already too numerous), who were ready to promote their own personal systems in the name of manuscripts or authors of the Middle Ages? The best attitude really was to perfect, patiently and unobtrusively, the chant of the monastery, its repertory and its principles of execution.

Dom Mocquereau, younger, and above all less involved in the battle centered around his master, found this temporizing hard. Of course, there was the "offensive" carried

on around the Father Abbot that in the long run was to win out over the "defensive," to such an extent that Dom Mocquereau ended by obtaining permission from Dom Couturier against these many contrary influences. But he had to take charge of everything: editing, printing, subscriptions, correspondence, together with a few monks won over by the contagion; . . . Dom Pothier remained aloof from the monumental publication destined for the defense of his work.

In January 1889 the first fascicle of the *Paleographie Musicale* appeared. "In order to show clearly," Dom Mocquereau would write later, "that we were submissive sons of the Holy See and that we were undertaking this great work only for the honor and glory of the Holy Church, we turned our eyes towards its august head, asking him to bless our work and accept its dedication. The name and blessing of Leo XIII placed at the head of our paleographic collection would assure it his fullest protection."

As explicit as was this pontifical blessing, recent experience made the monks of Solesmes move with the greatest prudence. The *Paleographie Musicale* was intended to be established on the most peaceful heights of disinterested research. No trace of polemic. The general introduction, edited of course by Dom Mocquereau but under the imposing anonymity of "monks of Solesmes," unfolded in fifty in-quarto pages the fullness of a program in which musicology, paleography, linguistics, liturgy were all invited to take their place. These sciences were brought together for the study and discussion of the manuscripts, but they were applied in a fine spirit of renunciation for the welfare of the cause.

"Regardless how few or many monastic fragments have been published up to now; what we lack are complete monuments. This lack jeopardizes our very studies. The original notations are our true sources, our means of study and action; we are looking for them, not for the sterile satisfaction of making a vast collection, but to furnish *musicians* with the most suitable means of fulfilling the program imposed on them by the present situation of musical science."

Characteristically French, the editor does not define in advance the method of his research. (Is not method what is established afterwards, as the most rational way that the research should have followed, once it is confirmed by success?) Thus, no method is given, but rather a map of a project where one may foresee three stages: 1. establishment of the text by a critical study of sources, these being first of all the melodic documents in neumatic or modern notation, rather than treatises or commentaries of the musicologists of the middle ages; 2. intrinsic analysis of the melodies, once restored, in order to discover their laws of composition and hence rules of interpretation; 3. comparison with other forms of musical art in Christian antiquity, such as the "dialects" of Gregorian, Ambrosian, Gallican and Mozarabic chant, and also the whole Hebrew and Greco-Roman musical past.

Surely Dom Mocquereau and his collaborators had a broad viewpoint. Yet what in one man's case would be presumption, becomes courage in the case of many. And when it is a question of monks who have eternity in which to work, courage is simply uprightness equal to the task at hand. For in spite of the credit enjoyed by the books published by the abbey for the use of monasteries of the Congregation of France, in particular the *Liber Gradualis* of 1883, one may say that in the matter of scientific research, practically everything had to be started from the bottom. Manuscripts were rare at Solesmes itself, where there were available only copies done by hand by some of the monks, and of course, in one single copy of each. Collections were not yet catalogued as they would be only after years of research. It was necessary to leave the abbey to seek them out. In July 1886, Dom Mocquereau, accompanied by Dom Pothier, was at the Abbey of Saint Gall, where he hurriedly took notes on the riches of the library, photographing a gradual of the tenth century, Codex 339, which would be retained for the first volume to appear in the *Paleographie Musicale*.

In Dom Sunol's words:

"Henceforth teams of Solesmian copyists would go all

over Europe.

“The account of their visits in the various libraries forms regular itineraries: Iter Gallicum, Iter Italicum, etc., recalling those of the Maurists of the eighteenth century, with judicious notes and very interesting personal observations.

“At various times the researches were taken up again; they developed more methodically, especially in view of the preparation of the Vatican edition (1904-5). About this time, two monks of En-Calcat went all over Spain and their Iter Hispanicum increased the already large collection.

“Later, in 1914, two monks of Solesmes entered the field to explore the southern part of Germany and to complete the Iter Germanicum. They went on to Austria and arrived at the borders of Italy. The Iter Anglicum was to be increased, always in view of works to come.

“The results of these scientific excursions were splendid, and the scriptorium was enriched with an admirable collection, perhaps unique, of photographs of manuscripts.

“To this work of personal research was added the devoted collaboration of all good wills, wherever were found friends of Gregorian Chant. It was a very real help through the considerable number of notes or documents brought to light.”

Nourished by an inexhaustible source, the fascicles of the *Paleographie Musicale* came out regularly, progressively providing the most interesting documents for the use of scholars. Their composition, despite the announced prospectus, was not in a rigid order; a war machine has to lend itself to the fluctuations of battle. Thus volume one, consecrated to the full reproduction of one single document, was followed by two volumes composed following another formula.

As Dom Gajard puts it:

“The first volume had reproduced a manuscript of Saint-Gall, codex 339; the comparison between this manuscript and the *Liber Gradualis* of 1883 decisively proved the authenticity of the melodic version restored by Dom Pothier. Instead of giving up, opponents pretended that one manuscript alone proved nothing, that, moreover, manuscripts throughout the world did not agree, and that in view of these differences the restoration of the true Gregorian chant was impossible.

“The *Paleographie Musicale* took up the challenge magnificently; this is well known. There could be no question of publishing at once hundreds of manuscripts dispersed throughout the libraries of Europe; and on the other hand they had to move quickly, for very soon the privilege given the Medicean edition was due to expire, and it was necessary for Rome to have at hand all the arguments needed to act freely and competently. Thus, renouncing for the time being, in volume two, his first resolution to publish only entire documents, Dom Mocquereau chose one piece, the melody of the Gradual Response, *Justus ut palma*, which he reproduced according to 219 antiphonaries from the ninth to the seventeenth century, from all countries of Europe. Save for a few variations of detail, it was always substantially, almost note for note, the same melody, that of the *Liber Gradualis* of Solesmes. For open minds, proof was established.

“Thus in the third volume, while the publication of the *Justus* was going on, we find another yet more striking deviation from the first decisions! In spite of the resolution to refrain as much as possible from notes and commentaries, we find a study, very developed, on the tonic accent and Gregorian psalmody, which was to be completed in volume four by a parallel study on the *cursus* and on psalmody.”

But let us leave here the history of the *Paleographie Musicale*, to return to the Roman Congress of Liturgical Arts and Sciences, organized in honor of the anniversary of the election and consecration of St. Gregory the Great, which was taking place at Rome in 1891.

II

The Motu Proprio of 1903 and the Vatican Edition

Upon going to Rome, Dom Mocquereau was happy to find there an Italian Jesuit whom he had met the year before at Turin, during a first exploration of the libraries of Italy in quest of documents for the *Paleographie Musicale*. Father Angelo de Santi, S.J., was the music editor of *Civiltà Cattolica*, and thus charged by the Holy See to defend the neomedicean edition. Far from trying to avoid each other, the two men met again at Santa Chiara, where Dom Mocquereau and his companion Dom Cabrol were guests of the French Seminary during their investigation of the Roman libraries. As soon as he arrived, Dom Mocquereau had given some lessons to the schola of the seminary. They began with the Mass *Reminiscere*. Father de Santi was at Santa Chiara for the *Laetare* Mass. He was won over, and immediately the chapel of the French Seminary was known by everyone in Rome who was following the Gregorian restoration.

Thus Dom Mocquereau no longer expected to see in Father de Santi an opponent. But did he doubt of the decisive support that the editor of *Civiltà Cattolica* would give his cause? Dared he dream of a manifestation as astonishing as the discourse that this Jesuit, once an advocate of the choral books of Ratisbonne, would give in the course of a hearing of the schola of the ~~Vatican~~ seminary? In his lecture entitled "Gregory the Great, Leo XIII and the Liturgical Chant," Father de Santi did not hesitate to compare the two editions, to show the full advantage of the Liber Gradualis of Dom Pothier, and to admit the neomedicean only on condition that the rhythm be transformed according to the Solesmes method.

In the eulogy that he gave Dom Pothier and the monks of Solesmes in the name of a "return to St. Gregory," *Revertimini ad Fontes S. Gregorii*, Father de Santi had mentioned the *Paleographie Musicale*:

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“A remarkable work which, reproducing by means of phototype the most ancient neumatic manuscripts, aims to show with evidence not only the primitive musical phrase, imprinted in the very documents themselves, but also the original Gregorian rhythm. Thus the hesitation heretofore held by scholars seems no longer reasonable; in fact, it is no longer possible. This is one of the most marvelous results of science and art that can be offered St. Gregory the Great for his centenary.”

Astonishing as was this gesture of the editor of the *Civilita Cattolica*, thus going over openly to the “enemy,” the milieu in Rome was ready for it. Another scholarly Jesuit, Father Grisar, professor of the University of Innsbruck and celebrated historian, had given a conference several weeks before in the French Seminary, before Cardinal Masella, prefect of Rites, and the Cardinal-Vicar, in which he gave the warmest praise to the archeological and musical studies of the monks of Solesmes. As a historian he praised the confirmation given by the *Paleographie Musicale* to the Gregorian origin of the chant of the Roman Church. “It makes it plain, in fact, that these liturgical melodies form such a homogeneous whole that they must necessarily proceed from one primitive antiphonary, written according to all the rules of the art, and this antiphonary is none other than that of St. Gregory.”

The intervention of Father Grisar, S.J., received its real meaning from the fact that the year before a controversy had gone on between the *Revue Benedictine*, published by the monks of Maredsous abbey in Belgium, and the famous scholar Auguste Gevaert, on the attribution of the liturgical chant to St. Gregory the Great. In what sense could one maintain the traditional feeling that the ecclesiastical chant had been called Gregorian because of the role played in its composition by Gregory the Great? The Ratisbonne partisans had always shown distrust toward this tradition, but it had never been seriously attacked before Gevaert, in 1890, advanced the theory that it was not a reference to Gregory the Great but, a century after him, the Hellenic popes, notably the two Syrians, Sergius I (687-701) and Gregory III (731-741). Against

this thesis Dom Moran, well known for his erudition, arose in the name of the monks of Maredsous. To Gevaert's work, *Les Origines du Chant Liturgique de l'Eglise Latine*, he answered in a series of articles in favor of the traditional thesis, called *Les Veritables Origines du Chant Gregorien*. The articles of the *Revue Benedictine* had not been finished when the committee for organizing the "Roman Congress of Liturgical Sciences and Art" held its first meetings, preparatory to celebrating the centenary of the crowning of St. Gregory. Roman circles, as one may easily understand, were happy to receive the support of Father Grisar at this critical moment, and the esteem of the learned Jesuit caused great respect for the scientific enterprise of the French Benedictines.

However, Father de Santi, who was not in charge of history but rather of religious music in the *Civiltà*, had a more direct reason to vote for the position of the *Paleographie Musicale*. Dom Mocquereau brought him tables of concordance of the manuscripts that were to appear in the fascicles of volumes two and three, consecrated exclusively to a critical study of the melody of the gradual response *Justus ut palma*, established by the phototype of the antiphonaries of the ninth to the seventeenth centuries, coming from all countries of Europe. The melodic line given by each was deciphered, discussed, and registered on comparative tables of various types, which together constituted a system of criteria to establish the authentic original melody with scientific and critical certitude. Dom Mocquereau rediscovered, together with the true original melody, the rules of application of words to melody, the rules of tonic accent, the rules relative to weak penultimates, the rules of musical rime, etc. The comparative method, provided it be carried to the point to which Solesmes had carried it, finally offered the key that the Sacred Congregation of Rites had threatened to lose, when it granted an exclusive privilege to the neomedicean edition twenty years before.

Father de Santi heard the demonstrations of Dom Mocquereau, who explained what the two next volumes of his *Paleographie Musicale* would contain. He did not have to wait for the unanimous admiration which such an extensive

critical study would receive in the following years, placing henceforward the research on liturgical chant at the vanguard of all sciences of pure erudition. Father de Santi became immediately a friend of Solesmes as powerful as reliable. Let us say more reliable than powerful, however, for as appreciated as he was by Leo XIII, he did have his troubles, luckily only for a time. Thus it was that in January 1894 he had to leave Rome.

What was the cause of this sudden change, marked by the decree *Quod S. Sugustinus*, which, as we have seen, on July 7, 1894, repeated word for word the decree *Romanorum Pontificum* of 1883? It seems that the cause was two-fold. On the one hand, the Holy See was disturbed by the excesses of the press campaign smiled at by the French clergy, which had led the government of Paris to approach the Cardinal Secretary of State through its ambassador at Rome. Certain journals made a sort of accusation of the prefect of Rites to the effect that he had received bribes from the Bavarian editor. On the other hand, the Ratisbonne books had regained credit when their stubborn upholder, the scholar Father Haberl, who had returned to examine the Roman archives in November 1893, was lucky enough to find an official document proving that the medicean version had been established by the great Palestrina himself, a fact disputed by his opponents.

Thus the duel continued, without either rival admitting defeat. At Rome, the Vatican seminary continued to use the Pustet edition, but following the principles of the Benedictines. In France, the Abbey of Solesmes reedited an improved *Liber Gradualis* in 1895 and was becoming the headquarters of the Gregorian restoration, but without mixing in the quarrels. It sufficed simply to print fascicles of the *Paleographie Musicale*, the volumes of which succeeded each other with growing interest. Dom Pothier was no longer at the monastery; he had left it in 1893 to become prior of Saint-Martin de Liguge; he assured by his regular collaboration support of a publication more practical in character, the *Revue du Chant Gregorien*, founded in Grenoble, in 1892.

Dom Mocquereau and Dom Pothier were henceforth separated, but kept up contact on numerous occasions.

Solesmes was then receiving a great deal. Charles Bordes brought there the masters and students of the Schola Cantorum that he had founded in 1894 "to encourage the performance of plain-chant according to the Gregorian tradition—the return to honor of the music of Palestrina—the creation of a modern religious music—the improvement of the repertory of organists." By January 1895 the Schola had its monthly bulletin, *La Tribune de Saint-Gervais*. The contents of its first number opened with an article of Camille Bellaigue, the musical chronicler of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, on Giovanni Pierluigi de Palestrina. Bellaigue, who knew the right way of doing things, invoked the authority of Dr. Haberl in the very first line. It was high courtesy in a publication that gave at the head of the list of its collaborators a whole series of Benedictines: Dom Pothier, Dom Mocquereau, Dom Bourigaud, Dom Parisot.

The French episcopate did not minimize its support of the work of Solesmes. To mention only cardinals: those of Bordeaux (1895), of Rodez (1895), of Rheims (1896), presided over congresses of religious music in which there was discussion of the return to Gregorian. The diocesan congress of religious music and of plain chant that was held at Rodez in July 1895 was all the more remarkable in that there was read there a report on the liturgical books and the decrees of the Holy See in which it was recalled that "the editions authorized by the bishops in their dioceses ought to be followed until they themselves, judges of the wishes of the Supreme Pontiff, decided otherwise." There was agreement to allow the status quo to continue until the privilege of Pustet expired, but without allowing in that regard the least allusion to it. But rather, the bad editions still in the hands of singers were deplored, the more strongly inasmuch as the Benedictine method was proclaimed. At Rodez Dom Mocquereau read a very learned *Memoire on Roman Psalmody and the Latin Tonic Accent*, while the chants were directed by one of his students.

All this propaganda (if we may call it propaganda) was apparently done with the blessing of the Holy Father. In rectories the least signs of good will on the part of the entourage of Leo XIII toward the students of the French Seminary were recalled, as were the words of the cardinal vicar on March 19, 1895: "Always love Gregorian chant. Once Rome gave it to France by St. Gregory; today we have lost it, and now France is about to give it back to us." To tell the truth, no one doubted that victory was imminent.

In fact the denouement was really at hand. In March 1899, appeared the reedition of the Gardellini, the official collection of the authentic decrees of the Sacred Congregation of Rites. In its third volume, the decree of April 26, 1883, *Romanorum Pontificum* had disappeared. The decree *Quod S. Augustinus* (that of 1894, whose signer was still alive) was still there, but in a modified and moderated text. The favor of Leo XIII doubtless was with the French Benedictines. Don Perosi, now perpetual chapel master of the Sixtine, had the melodies restored by Solesmes sung before the Pope. Moreover, taking possession of his new functions he gave the abbey to know "his firm will to work in every way for the complete, prompt victory."

In 1900 the second congress of Christian archeology was held in Rome. Father Grisar, S.J., faithful to his friendship, asked that the *Paleographie Musicale* be strongly recommended as an instrument of study of the middle ages. But his wish was considered only after being returned to the commission, from which it reappeared, but much weakened. It was at the intervention of a Benedictine, Father Janssens, an associate of Don Amelli, president of the congress, that the wish of Father Grisar was returned to the commission. This was a first sign of discord in the Benedictine camp. Would the adversary profit by it? No. At the end of the year the famous thirty-year privilege expired and was not renewed. True, the promoters of the *Paleographie Musicale* continually received the help of new adherents. On the return of Father de Santi, S.J., to Rome, once more restored to favor, the master of papal ceremonies, Msgr, Respighi,

himself appeared in the arena to overturn the argument proposed by Haberl in favor of attributing the abridged edition of Ratisbonne to Palestrina. Palestrina was definitely not the author of the Medicean.

With the year 1901, after the privilege had ended, Rome was fully free. In January, Leo XIII replied to the cardinal vicar who informed him of the concern of the Roman seminaries that "the restoration of Gregorian chant ought to take new route and that the venerable traditional melodies of the Church may resound in our churches with perfect freedom." At the same time, the monks of Solesmes were officially invited to send to the Holy Father a memorandum on their work in favor of the Gregorian restoration. The abbot, Dom Paul Delatte, signed in their name the *Memoire on the Studies of the Benedictines of Solesmes Concerning the Restoration of the Liturgical Melodies of the Roman Church*, printed at Solesmes, presented by Cardinal Satolli to Leo XIII. The reply was not long in coming. On May 17 the brief *Nos Quidem* to Dom Delatte made official the esteem of the Holy See for "the cares taken by the monks of Solesmes with so much intelligence for the science of the sacred chants, attributed by tradition to Gregory the Great," and especially "in the research and publication of the ancient documents pursued with so much zeal and perseverance." Then the brief became more explicit: it expressed gratitude for the chant books "widely spread and even in various places put in daily use." Then it declared that the return to Gregorian chant should be made quickly and freely.

In turn, the Sacred Congregation of Rites assured the freedom of editors, on July 10, 1901. Nothing now prevented the printing of "new editions, either of the neomedicean, or of any other musical text legitimately in use according to the declarations of the Holy See, provided that the principles of the law were observed."

The rest is common knowledge. On August 9, 1903, Cardinal Sarto succeeded Leo XIII on the throne of St. Peter. His resolute spirit brooked no delay in decisions that every-

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one waited for. On November 22, 1903, a *Motu Proprio* declared that "the ancient Gregorian chant ought to be largely reestablished in functions of worship." On December 8, a letter of the cardinal vicar advised the seminaries of Rome that the reign of incorrect, altered, truncated editions was over. "Long and attentive studies have changed the face of things. Gregorian chant returned in such a satisfactory way to its primitive purity, as it was transmitted by our fathers and is found in the manuscripts of various churches, appears sweet, suave, easy to learn."

On January 9, 1904, the Congregation of Rites revoked the privileges and recommendations still possessed by the Ratisbonne books. On February 14 it declared the editions of Solesmes conformed to the *Motu Proprio*. Dom Mocquereau assisted at the papal mass of the centenary of St. Gregory sung in Gregorian by twelve hundred seminarians and religious of Rome. On April 25 a *Motu Proprio* declared the publication official and obligatory for the whole Church, of a Vatican edition of Gregorian chant, restored in its integrity and purity according to the most ancient manuscripts, and entrusted the editing to Solesmes. When, on May 22, the brief *Ex Quo Tempore* to the abbot, Dom Delatte, confirmed this responsibility on him, the papal commission for the Vatican edition was already constituted. To preside over it, Dom Mocquereau stepped aside for Dom Pothier, now abbot of Saint-Wandrille. On the commission were only friends of the Benedictines, including Don Amelli and Canon Perriot, the president and vice-president of the Arezzo congress.

III

The Dispute on Rhythmic Editions

Curiously, of the ten members and ten consultors of the papal commission for the Vatican edition of the Gregorian liturgical books, there was only one monk of Solesmes, Dom Mocquereau, prior of the Abbey. It was quickly understood that some purpose lay hidden here. A plenary reunion took

place September 6 to 9 at Appuldurcombe, on the Isle of Wight, where the Benedictines of Solesmes were refugees after their expulsion from the holy place where Gueranger had established them; at this meeting the reflections of the members of the commission betrayed some embarrassment. Still, the public was free to see in it only the observance of the secret imposed by the *Motu Proprio* of April 25. In fact, the commission, led by its president, left forever the scriptorium that had cradled the *Paleographie Musicale*. It would meet again, but at Rome (April-May 1905), and this would be its last meeting. Henceforth the members were consulted only by correspondence until the commission officially disappeared, in 1912.

In January 1905, the *Tribune de Saint-Gervais* announced an international congress of Gregorian chant to take place at Strassburg in mid-August. France would be represented by Dom Pothier, while Dom Mocquereau would represent England. At Strassburg Dom Mocquereau did not appear, but the congress did unanimously applaud a vote of homage to Solesmes. At the same time the papal commission announced that the Kyriale of the Vatican edition had received the official and final go-ahead: "It is happy to declare that this work, based on the 1895 edition, and in agreement with the dispositions of the Holy See on this subject, represents the fruit of the patient and enlightened research of the Reverend Fathers of Solesmes." Those who knew understood.

On the preceding June 24 there had been published a letter addressed in the name of the Holy Father, by His Eminence, the Cardinal Secretary of State, to the Most Reverend Father Dom Joseph Pothier, abbot of Saint-Wandrille, O.S.B., president of the papal commission for the Vatican edition of the Gregorian liturgical books. The document began thus:

"Reverend Father. The preparatory works of the papal Commission for the Vatican Edition of the Gregorian liturgical books have made evident the many advantages of a simplification of the work of edition, to allow greater profit

from the results obtained by the initiators of the Gregorian restoration.

“Hence, after again speaking to the Benedictine monks, particularly to those of the Congregation of France and the monastery of Solesmes, and praising them for the intelligent and fruitful work that they have given for the restoration of the melodies of the Church, the Holy Father has deigned to decide, in his high good-will, that the Vatican Edition to be published be based on the Benedictine edition published at Solesmes in 1895; he recognizes thus the undoubtedly value of this work of restoration so well undertaken. And it is to your paternity, as president of the papal commission, that the Holy Father confides the delicate mission of revising and correcting the edition in question; and in this work you will be helped by the several members of the commission, using also, according to need, the precious paleographical studies done under the wise direction of the Most Reverend Abbot of Solesmes. And so that this important work may proceed with more promptness, His Holiness appeals to the several members of the commission for a more direct collaboration in those liturgical books whose melodic restoration is less advanced.”

Despite the intention of “safeguarding the letter and spirit of the previous papal documents, including the brief addressed to the Abbot of Solesmes, May 22, 1904,” this meant the end of the participation of the Solesmes monks in the works of the Vatican edition. Prescribing that the basis of the edition be the “Benedictine edition published at Solesmes in 1895,” which was only a reedition of the *Liber Gradualis* published by Dom Pothier in 1883, the letter of the Secretary of State took issue against the most recent Benedictine edition, the *Liber Usualis* of 1903, work of Dom Mocquereau. In other words, Rome agreed with those who did not wish to recognize the historic or musical value in the ideas and works of the abbey of Solesmes, since its paleographic school followed Dom Mocquereau in the rhythmic reconstitution of the Gregorian phrase.

In 1901, at the moment of the departure into exile, the monks of Solesmes had wished to place at the foot of the Sainte-Chasse of the Cathedral of Chartres, volumes five, six, seven of the *Paleographie Musicale*. This last was dedicated to the *Virgini Pariturae*. It contained a thesis on the tonic accent and the Gregorian rhythm in which Dom Mocquereau had marked a decisive step of his career as restorer of the rhythmic tradition.

How had he been led to this? Dom Gajard has noted that "very probably in founding the *Paleographie Musicale*, Dom Mocquereau planned not at all to resolve the problem of rhythm, which then did not disturb him at all, any more than his other contemporaries. The work that he was creating was to be purely paleographical and not rhythmical." However, from the very first volumes of the *Paleographie* the study of the melodic "formulas" brought out laws of composition and grammar of that musical language. But these laws led simply to ruin in its very foundation a universally admitted principle as basis of Gregorian interpretation: the principle of the obligatory coincidence of the Latin tonic accent with the strong beat. Paleography was daily establishing more clearly that the Latin tonic accent does not coincide in the Gregorian melodies with its rhythmic fall. The Latin accent is brief and light. Thus far Dom Mocquereau went along with Dom Pothier. But he found himself alone when he wanted to enter the study of the nature of the musical rhythm and its relations with intensity and the Latin accent. For him this was an immense search with ever widening limits. He had to examine the musical facts to arrive at a finally essential definition of musical rhythm, which he found to be not in intensity, but in movement, the order of movement. He had to search among the grammarians, ancient and modern, to learn from them the various factors bearing on the problem of the Latin accent. He finally had to bring about the union of musical philology and Latin philology, to justify his thesis of a musical, not oratorical, rhythm, a rhythm independent of intensity, with the Latin accent sometimes on the up-beat, sometimes on the down-beat, according to the exigencies of the melodic line and the neumatic notation.

Volume seven of the *Paleographie Musicale*, in which Dom Mocquereau explained the course of his research in working out this thesis, stirred up, says Dom Gajard, a veritable storm:

“Sure of his facts, Dom Mocquereau held his head against the storm, alone against everyone. It was during the publication of the seventh volume that the struggle was liveliest. The objections that came to him from everywhere were not without use; they made him work, clarify his thought more exactly, and finish his exposition little by little, until it took on the scope of a treatise on rhythm.

“The theories sketched in the seventh volume of the *Paleographie*, however, were only a stop-gap, improvised in the fire of battle, somewhat haphazard depending on discussion. They had to be thought out again in calmness, to be exposed methodically without any polemical character, clarified, developed, fortified by clearer and clearer arguments. This was the purpose of the *Nombre Musical Gregorien*, in which they find their definitive form.”

The *Nombre Musical Gregorien*, principal work of the founder of the *Paleographie*, was to cost him a life of hard, unremitting labor, constantly reexposed to the forge. The first volume appeared in 1908; the second and final in 1927. The two parts of the first volume are dedicated to the general laws of all rhythm, and to pure Gregorian rhythm, that is without text or words. Nineteen years would have to pass before the second volume appeared with its application of these principles to the Gregorian liturgical texts. Dom Mocquereau would dedicate a special chapter to showing how his theory of the independence of the rhythmic ictus from the Latin tonic accent, the basis of the Solesmes method, is only the codification and justification of the teachings of Dom Pothier.

However, in 1905, the division hitherto latent of the friends of Dom Pothier and those of Dom Mocquereau be-

came public, and even openly discussed. It divided French Gregorianists to such an extent that it is not possible to appreciate it except by reading the collection of the *Tribune de Saint-Gervais* starting at this time. *Haec sunt initia dolorum*. The abbey of Solesmes had triumphed only to be painfully overwhelmed, and the Vatican had to manage without it: the *Kyriale* (1905), the *Chants of the Missal* (1907), the *Gradual* (1907-1908), the *Office of the Dead* (1909), the *Cantorinus* (1911), the *Antiphonary* (1912).

It was even attacked regarding the permission of using, in the reproduction of the typical edition, the rhythmic signs, the property of which had been reserved to the Abbey in express terms by Pius X.

The Sacred Congregation did not however wish to approve those who assured that the rhythmic edition, not being conformed to the Vatican edition, ought to be condemned. It elaborated a decree that tolerated in a general way every type of rhythmic edition, provided that the signs added in it would not affect either the form of the notes nor the way in which they were joined (February 14, 1906).

Dom Mocquereau, on his side, abandoned the system of rhythmic notation of the *Liber Usualis* of 1903; he adopted new figures so that the rhythmic signs should appear without doubt separated from the notes of the official edition.

The Sacred Congregation explained that it was not condemning or approving in any absolute way. Dom Mocquereau took note of this tolerance and concluded philosophically:

“In favor of this tolerance of which every editor can take advantage, the Benedictines of Solesmes will continue to use supplementary rhythmic signs. During the twenty-five years that have just passed their books of Gregorian chant were only tolerated: it was however these tolerated, ignored books that led us to the Vatican Edition. Is it rash to hope that the formal tolerance today given the rhythmic signs will someday, after experience, have the same success, the same good fortune?”

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At Appuldurcombe the monks of Solesmes could have the impression of being twice exiled. Doubtless nothing was harder for them than the defection of many friends or visitors, unless it be the publication of a letter of Dom Pothier to Charles Widor, in which the president of the commission of the Vatican Edition exposed to the public that the rhythmic signs constituted for him a grave alteration of the notation:

“inasmuch as the distribution of these supplementary signs does not correspond at all to anything traditional, and that they have not even an exact relation to the famous Roman signs of Saint Gall, which it is pretended that they translate. These latter, moreover, even were they faithfully represented, since they belong to a particular school, have not the right to be imposed in the name of universal practice. Thus did the pontifical commission see matters from the beginning.

“We must safeguard with the responsibility of the Sacred Congregation and the rights of Catholic tradition, which cannot be that of a particular school, ancient or modern, both the just demands of art, which calls for more liberty, and the no less well-founded demands of science itself which supplies us equally with data both broader and higher.”

At any rate there was some satisfaction in the scriptorium transported to Quarr Abbey when the first books of the Vatican Edition appeared. One friend of the paleography was able to count that the official edition of the Gradual had retained more than two thousand improvements that the *Liber Usualis* of 1903 had added to the *Liber Gradualis* of 1895. But in 1911, on January 25, a new intervention of the Sacred Congregation of Rites stirred up alarms again. It was severe, granting only a precarious tolerance to editions “abusively called rhythmic editions.” Was this aimed at the edition of Solesmes? One could doubt this, so serious was the trouble caused by the proliferation of rhythmic editions unleashed in the dioceses where the clergy were trying to understand the Vatican Edition. Under the pretext of rhythmic editions, in which the arrangement of signs of

length and accentuation was arbitrarily treated by each editor, this was a return to disorder, rivalry, and cacophony.

Whatever the case may be, the decree of January 25, 1911, soon received an official interpretation (April 11, 1911) which reassured all the friends of Solesmes, specifying that the prohibition did not have in mind "editions for scholarly use, provided with rhythmic signs of private authority." These friends were joyful when in the following year, in his regulation for sacred music at Rome, the cardinal vicar permitted the use of the Tournai books "for greater uniformity in the execution of Gregorian chant." From that date, the adoption of the edition of Solesmes by dioceses, including Rome, has furnished the Solesmes editions the best "possession" possible, that of usage that forms custom, *optima legum interpres*.

In 1913 the papal commission for the Vatican Edition, which no longer existed, disappeared legally, without any commotion, by the quiet nomination of a new commission charged with continuing the Vatican Edition. The new president was one of the best known collaborators of the *Paleographie Musicale*, Dom Feretti. Hence-forward the liturgical books and new offices adopted for the universal Church would be edited by monks of the Abbey of Solesmes. In 1916 the *Cantus Passionis* appeared; in 1922 the *Office of Holy Week and the Octave*; in 1926 the *Office of Christmas*. These books, representing the true completion of the works of the *Paleographie Musicale* in the domain of the restoration of the Gregorian melody, are witnesses of the indefatigable work pursued for fifty years by Dom Mocquereau, and by his successor, Dom Gajard, who brought it to a happy end.

As regards the offices, *Christ the King*, the *Sacred Heart*, the *Maternity of the Blessed Virgin*, of *Christ the High Priest*, the *Common of Sovereign Pontiffs*, the *Immaculate Heart of Our Lady*, the *Assumption*, were all part of this.

In 1922 the scriptorium returned from exile to Solesmes.

In 1927 appeared the second and final volume of the *Nombre Musical Gregorien*. Its publication gave the Holy Father an occasion to show the author his own satisfaction, offering him a gold medal, while the Secretary of State, Cardinal Gasparri, wrote congratulations.

In 1930 Dom Mocquereau passed away in the Lord. It was January 18, feast of St. Peter at Rome. His disciple and intimate collaborator, Dom Gajard, would soon write that doubtless his principal work is his rhythmic work. No one has entered as profoundly as he into the analysis of rhythm.

“It is characteristic of the genius of Dom Mocquereau that his whole *Paleographie* should end in the *Nombre Musical*, that the study of the neum would lead to the understanding of rhythm. Publishing manuscripts, showing their concordance, cataloguing neumatic forms, discussing their graphic particularities, all this is certainly excellent work, but within the scope of everyone; all one needs is eyes, a flair for it, and taste for work of pure erudition. But far more was needed to untangle the chaos in which theoreticians were arguing without ever being able to get out, and to disentangle from this mass of obscurity that simple and luminous synthesis that makes of musical language the most supple instrument imaginable. As M. Le Guennant says, ‘Nothing less was needed for this than the clear genius of a French monk.’ ”

In 1949, June 6, for the centenary of the birth and baptism of Dom Mocquereau, the Very Reverend Dom Cozien, abbot of Solesmes, inaugurated in the hall of the scriptorium a plaque on which were engraved the lines of the Master:

TO SEEK OUT THE MIND OF OUR FATHERS, WITH-
DRAW OURSELVES BEFORE THEIR AUTHENTIC IN-
TERPRETATION, SUBMIT OUR ARTISTIC JUDGMENT
HUMBLY TO THEIRS: THIS IS WHAT IS REQUIRED
BY BOTH THE LOVE WHICH WE SHOULD HAVE
FOR THE ENTIRE TRADITION, MELODIC AS MUCH
AS RHYTHMIC, AND THE RESPECT FOR AN ART-
FORM PERFECT OF ITS KIND.

THE BARS OF GREGORIAN NOTATION AND MUSICAL PUNCTUATION

by Dom Joseph Gajard, O.S.B.,
Choirmaster of Solesmes Abbey

[EDITOR'S NOTE: This article has been translated from the French and printed here because of the incredible lack of understanding of its subject matter shown for some time by non-French choirmasters. The editor calls to the attention of the reader in this regard the "new" method of counting at the full bars which was already an old, established principle when this article was first published in 1948, seven years ago. No doubt Dom Gajard's remarks, clarified here for the first time, will surprise some, confuse others and embarrass a great many teachers who have not been "up" on these matters themselves. The editor feels that the stimulation of this clarification will, however, more than make up for the minor local revolutions it may cause.]

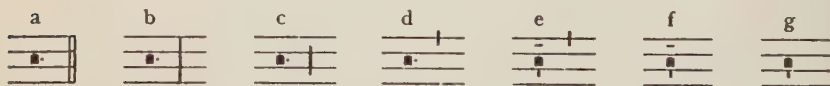
Differing from modern musical notation in which the bars always indicate the end of the measures and have no role to play in the architectural organization of the piece, the bars of Gregorian notation in present use are simply signs of logical musical punctuation. In this respect, being indifferent to the rhythmic flow, they can be placed as easily in the middle as at the end of the compound beats. They belong to the greater over-all rhythm, to the very economy of the piece, and aid efficaciously in effecting its synthesis. Their only purpose is to throw into relief each of the sections of variable importance which enter into the fabric of the piece by giving each its relative place and its active role in the inner life of the whole.

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Moreover, differing from modern music in which the bars, as simple material measuring points, have always the same form, the bars of Gregorian notation are ranked in order, smaller or larger according to the importance of the section they terminate: incises, members or phrases.

Let us recall in passing that music is a true language, a speech, and that like all speech, it is expressed little by little in a series of larger and larger and more comprehensive sections, which without losing anything of their individuality, are linked together, blended and made to complete each other in such a way as to express a single idea in all its complexities: words, phrases, clauses and sentence.

And just as the gradual development of writing has led to a whole system of logical punctuation to call attention respectively to each of these sections: spaces (between words), commas (between phrases), semi-colon (between clauses) and periods (between sentences), all things which existed in no form whatsoever in the old manuscripts and which we do not, however, hesitate to apply to the printed editions of the masterworks of literature, — so, too, it is with Gregorian notation, which has also a whole hierarchy of graphic signs, equally unknown in the manuscripts of the middle ages, and not the less precious. All the rhythmic units are clearly indicated, from the largest to the smallest:



- a) marks the end of the piece;
- b) marks the end of the phrase;
- c) marks the end of the member;
- d) marks the end of the incise;
- e) marks also the end of the incise;
- f) marks the tiniest rhythmic division (usually);
- g) marks the end of the elementary rhythm, the rhythmic step.

In this descending and graded order all these signs belong to the same category, that of *movement*; all are simply signs of *musical punctuation*. Thus at the very first glance the rhythmic flow stands out before one's eyes; everything is in order and clear; words, incises, members and phrases are distinguished one from the other, clearly limited and defined.¹ Thanks to this graded punctuation, the mind is immediately capable of making a synthesis of it and of grasping in a single glance the general economy of the piece, that which is ultimately important. How may the singers, who are simply interpreters, bring the listeners to "understand" the work of art if they have not themselves first of all really "understood it" in all the complexity of its structure? How many performances, both Gregorian and other music, whether it be vocal or instrumental music, are unintelligible because they are uninformed! How is it possible to find oneself in these performances when the different aspects of them are not clearly brought out? Let us thank the Gregorian editors, since the beginning of the restoration in the last century, for having progressively and magnificently perfected the notation, and for permitting us to profit from a system of logical punctuation which on this point at least, let us admit, holds great advantages over modern musical notation.

But it is not everything to be able to recognize in the books the various graded signs of punctuation. More than anything else it is vital that their effect be made apparent in practice.

Now then, to mention only the bars, which are the subject of the present article, what progress there is to be made! How often do choirs make the same full rest at all the bars of whatever size they may be, thus reducing the musical piece to a series of juxtaposed elements, perfectly unintelligible and insipid. The phrase, chopped, sliced and dissected, drags on lamentably, giving an unbearable impression of breathlessness.

1. Note that, except for the horizontal episema, none of these different signs exist as such in the manuscripts, neither the largest bars, the dots nor the vertical episemas.

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Let us add that the danger is just as great in not breathing at all and tying together all the incisives and members up to the full bar which closes the phrase. Synthesis is equally impossible in this case. The comprehension, which needs to analyze and proceed by steps, no longer has the elements necessary for its proper function. It is henceforth lost in this long succession of sections which contain nothing to keep them in order. From this stage there can remain a certain aural pleasure, but this is of inferior quality of a purely sensual order. The musical speech and the meaning of the work are lost to the listener who is, moreover, painfully affected by an impression of almost physical tension, due to the lack of breathing.

And let us not say that the vocal quality suffices in itself and makes up for what is lacking otherwise! Far too many choirmasters are perhaps overly concerned with bringing out the sonority of their choirs, or, what is worse, the voice of one of the soloists. Not that it is fitting to disdain either the beauty or the purity of the tone . . . far from that. It is necessary, but in the long run it is not everything! Gregorian chant is in no wise a concert, even a spiritual one. **Even** less is it intended to show off the facility or virtuosity of the voices or of the conductor. To whatever extent it is not used to shed light on the text and increase its power as prayer, chant no longer has any right in church. It loses all its meaning and even its reason for existence.

The need to safeguard the hierarchy of musical values and thus to respect the corresponding ranking of the bar-lines is essential.

* * *

If we ignore, for the moment, the double bar which indicates the end of a piece or the change of choir, the bars in present Gregorian notation are reduced to three:

- 1) the quarter bar which marks the end of incisives:



2) the half bar which marks the end of members:



3) the full bar which marks the end of phrases:



Only the phrase forms a complete whole, organized and sufficient in itself. The member and incise do form smaller units, too, but these are incomplete. These are subdivisions of the phrase which have truthfully a meaning in themselves, but which express only part of the idea set forth and call for a complement in order to be fully intelligible. They are as functions of the phrase of which they form an integral part and from which they cannot be separated.

The distinction between members and incises is more subtle. It cannot arise from anything but the length and relative importance of them, the incise being, says Dom Mocquereau¹, “sometimes a member, sometimes only a *pars membri*, forming then a more restricted unit, less complete than the member properly speaking . . . like a sort of logical subdivision of the more lengthy members”. It is not rare that the difference stems primarily “from the general cast of the phrase, from art and from good taste”.²

From this we see that the full bar alone, which closes the phrase, calls for a real pause, marking a clear separation between the idea which has just finished and the next to follow. On the contrary, the quarter bar and half bar, which follow respectively the incises and the members, must suffice to distinguished adequately without ever separating them the little units of greater or lesser importance which enter into the fabric of the phrase, which they form through their connection and to which they are inseparably bound.

1. *Nombre Musical*, volume II, at No. 842.

2. *Ibid.*, No. 873.

Such is the general principle which governs the whole question of the bars. The application could not be subject to rigorous mathematical rules, since it is also a question of synthesis and thus of comprehension. It is nevertheless not impossible to formulate rules which, providing they are not followed rigidly and inflexibly, are adequate in most cases to assure a perfect execution.

To lend clearly a little order and clarity to these reflections, let us recognize three things to be done, or not to be done, at each of the bars:

- a) retard of the notes preceding the bar,
- b) the rest, or silent beat,
- c) the breath.

Next, here are the rules, simply enumerated, or rather the directives, which we propose to follow in practice. We shall discuss their scope presently:

- 1) At the quarter bar (end of incisives)
 - a) no retard of the notes preceding it,
 - b) no pause or rest,
 - c) often, no breath, either.
- 2) At the half bar (end of members)
 - a) no retard of the preceding notes,
 - b) no pause or rest,
 - c) usually a general breath, the time for which is taken from the dotted note.
- 3) At the full bar (end of phrases)
 - a) slight retard of the preceding notes,
 - b) a pause or rest, that is, a moment of actual silence,
 - c) a full respiration taken during the rest.

Thus everything is ranked in order, each section is presented in its proper dress and with its characteristic treatment. The incisives are sufficiently distinguished one from the other by the melodic sense of the cadence, very minor but

real, on which they end, without any material factor necessarily intervening. To this the members add usually a quick collective breath which, without interrupting the statement, strictly speaking, better under scores the articulation of the musical line. The phrases are clearly designated in their integrity as much by their broadened cadence as by the silent rest which separates them from their neighbors.

Let us note in passing once and for all that the broadening of the cadence concurs, quite as fully as the silence which characteristically follows, in giving the impression of something complete and finished. Also this should be as a rule reserved for the full bars which close the phrases. It is the failure to observe this rule which gives the chant, just as do overly-long repeated breaths, that percussive and choppy effect which must be avoided at any cost. As for the full bars themselves, the retard should be only a shading, discreet and proportional to the importance of the phrase which is being terminated or to the nature of the melodic cadence. It is only at the very end of the piece that the retard may be actually felt, and yet this is not always so, either. It is a question of taste and musical sense.

There remains the more complex problem of breathing. In this regard here are some ideas suggested by experience.

At the end of incises and members (quarter and half bars)

I group the two in the same paragraph because of the slight difference which sometimes exists between these two types of section.

I draw the reader's attention firstly especially to the *breath normally made at the half bars*. In reaction against the old system still maintained in too many scholas of literally breaking off at every bar, many choirs seem to have taken the habit of absolutely forbidding a general breath at the half bar. The intentions are good, but the exaggeration is none the less manifest. This is a real error which must be ruthlessly eliminated in order to return to a sensible, or if we may say, human, execution in harmony with the physical constitu-

tion of man. Providing that no real pause is made and that the breath is taken from the value of the dotted note which precedes it, this is applicable. This quick breath is excellent for distinguishing, without separating them, the little sections when make up the phrase.¹

Regarding the quarter bars, it is often better not to breathe all together, although this is not always forbidden.² And let us not pretend that it is impossible for a choir to sing a whole member or phrase without breathing. What is impossible for the individual becomes quite easy for many voices and even more so for a whole group. All that is necessary is the practice of the system of "individual breathing", each person taking breath wherever he feels it necessary while the others all go on. This rule of individual breathing ought to be the rule for all choirs. There can be no continuity or "musical line" without it. The only condition necessary is that the singer when taking breath reenter the vocal mass as quietly as possible without becoming conspicuous.

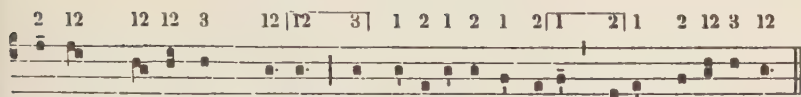
The consequence of the preceding remarks is that normally the presence of the quarter bar or half bar, whether or not one breathes at that point, changes absolutely nothing of the succession of elementary, binary and ternary rhythms. In other words, the analysis by twos and threes of the compound beats undergoes no modification whatsoever from the presence of the quarter or half bar. "When," says Dom Mocquereau, (*op. cit.*, No. 874), "the following member begins with a note on the upbeat, this note forms with the note preceding it a ternary compound beat or a broadened binary compound beat, depending on the case"; if it begins with the ictus, it follows directly on the preceding note without interruption:

1. "Here it is generally necessary to take a breath." Dom Mocquereau, *op. cit.*, 879.
2. "Generally it is better not to breathe at this division. If a breath is necessary, however, it should be made rapidly within the value of the dot." *Ibid.*

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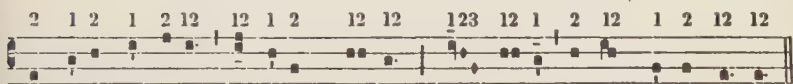
ternary compound beat

broadened tern. com. beat



Hoc est præceptum me-um, ut di-ligá-tis ínvicem, sicut di-léxi vos.

	member		phrase half-cadence breath		member	
incise	$\frac{1}{4}$ cadence	incise		incise	$\frac{1}{4}$ cadence	incise



Cantáte Dómino cánticum no-vum : laus e-jus ab extrémis terræ.

Let us add, however, one or two important remarks. And first of all it is good to clarify the fact that the rules just enumerated for the healthy practical observation of the bars at the end of the incisives and members could not have an absolute nature. There is sometimes room for a certain interpretation. After all, the bars are not, as such, found in any manuscripts. Their choice has been determined by the taste of the editor who, quite often, made no decision until after long deliberation.

I have said above that as an example the distinction between the incise and the member is not always very clear. It is sometimes very difficult, says Dom Mocquereau, "to draw a very clear line of demarkation between them"; some half bars can be treated like quarter bars and vice-versa. Much better, however, certain half bars would be easily adapted to the treatment reserved for full bars, and vice versa.

The truth of the matter is that three kinds of bar are not enough to cover all the cases which may arise, since it is a question of the *logical* organization of musical speech whose nuances, being infinite, recoil from any rigid or absolute categorizing. On the other hand, to add a greater variety of bars would perhaps be to incur the risk of making the performance too complicated for the smaller choirs, which make up the greater part of our groups.

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Thus it has seemed wise to content oneself with the present bars. But from this it results that the freedom of interpretation is partly opened to the taste of the interpreter, or more precisely, to the choirmaster, alone qualified to decide (the singers being in every instance bound to accede to his direction). The important thing is that the graded organization of the phrase be always perceptible to the musical sense of the listener. After all, this is nothing but a matter of proportions. To the extent that they are preserved, the goal is attained.

It still happens, and the case is, alas, frequently, that in our country parishes there is only one singer to handle the service in its entirety. Obviously a soloist needs to take breath more often than a whole choir, and this more deeply. Moreover, nothing is so unpleasant as to hear a singer running out of breath speed up his chant in order to arrive, come what may, at the end. It is a rule that the singer should always arrive at the cadence naturally and without effort. Thus he should not hesitate to modify the arrangement of the bars somewhat, by adding, for example, to the time needed for breathing at each of them. It is enough that he maintain exact proportion among them, and all will be well.

Here is, lastly, an error which is only too common and which must at all costs be avoided. I mean to speak of the haste attributed too often to certain lesser bars, due to the too materialistic observation of the horizontal episema.

When, before a quarter bar or even a half bar, the notation marks only a simple horizontal episema, particularly on a podatus or clivis, most choirs, in the fear of overdoing the value of it and "doubling" the note or neume bearing the episema, go even faster over it than had they no bar at all, literally leaping to the next beat as though, in a sense, they wanted to snatch up the notes. Good intentions are obvious, but misdirected. For the listener the result is an unpleasant jarring whose immediate effect is that of destroying his peace. The cure, is, however, worse than the illness. It would be a thousand times better to prolong the episema a

little too much and keep at least the atmosphere of tranquillity which comes first, since without it there is no prayer. The signs of punctuation, whether bars or episemas, are never ends, but means, and they ought to be treated as such, intelligently, with no touch of materialism. And please, let us never forget that we are here concerned with an expression of an idea, and let us do this *humano modo*, in a human fashion, respecting all the logical distinctions which this implies.

In the case of a long clivis, "do not be afraid," says Dom Mocquereau¹, "to bring out the retard of the clivis clearly, particularly on the first note, which carries all the weight of the rhythmic descent"; as for the second note, its transitory character is preserved, and it should not "lose anything of its full value for all of that, of course."² Musically it belongs to the first note of which it is, so to speak, the shadow, and at the risk of disorder, it should be distinguished by a slight break from the following incise. This is particularly important when the second incise begins with non-ictic note.

Let us remember that the presence of a bar can never be an invitation to haste, even when in our rhythmic editions the note or neume which precedes it carries no indication of length whatsoever. This is no reason to rush into the next incise. One should simply ignore the bar in such cases and sing as though it were non-existent. Anything that can disturb the peace should be eliminated without mercy.

At the end of phrases (full bars)

Here the pause is real and not taken from the value of the preceding note. What then shall be its exact value?

Obviously this value should be precise, for the rests belong to the rhythm quite as much as do the sung notes. What will this rest be, then?

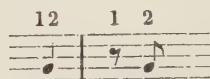
1. *Op. cit.*, No. 659, note 1.

2. *Ibid.*, No. 675.

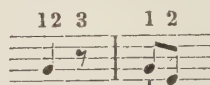
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Dom Mocquereau has said, in the second volume of his *Nombre Musical*, No. 877, sq., that in any case the value of an eighth rest, or that of a simple count, is enough. Consequently, in the musical editions, this eighth-rest is placed, very logically, in conformity with all the laws of rhythmic:

- a) *after the bar*, when the new compound beat begins on the up-beat:



- b) *before the bar*, when it begins on the ictus:



For a long time, based on the experience of various choirs, we have permitted ourselves a slight modification of the teaching of Dom Mocquereau, obviously not in the manner of putting it, but rather in the length itself of the rest, and we are sure that he would forgive us. Here it is, in simple terms:

The eighth-rest on the ictus, before a new beginning on the up-beat, above in example a), maintains the binary rhythm and as before, presents no problem.

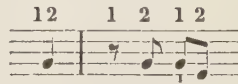
It is quite another matter with the eighth-rest added to the binary beat of the cadence before the new ictus (above in b). The choir is here obliged to take breath on the *silent* third count of a ternary beat. Now it is very difficult in free rhythm, particularly for a choir singing without conductor (as is the case in a great many religious houses), to measure the exact value of this silence when it is thus placed on the third count of a ternary compound beat, only the first two counts of which are sung, particularly again when as is so often the case, this ternary beat falls after a series of binaries. The singers, I may say, lose their footing, are upset, and continue in somewhat uneasy circumstances.

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It is much simpler and much more practical to avoid during these rests this ternary rhythm and to maintain in any case a binary movement. Quite naturally, spontaneously, I daresay even subconsciously, the choir continues at the desired moment with perfect precision and ensemble.

In this regard there is nothing to be changed, when the second phrase begins on the up-beat. When, on the other hand, it begins on the ictus, it will suffice to replace the eighth-rest with a quarter-rest, which avoids a ternary rhythm and maintains, even on the rest, the binary movement:

- a) *Beginning on the up-beat; eighth rest:*



- b) *Beginning on the ictus; quarter-rest:*





Do not be afraid that the inequality of the rests and their time-values bothers the singers. Quite on the contrary, the rhythm which they have just left off continues quite naturally during the silence, although one nevertheless will take care to maintain here the *retarded movement of the cadence*. Thus freed of all preoccupation, the singers have nothing to do but let themselves be carried tranquilly along, without thinking about it, in the spontaneous rhythm of the respiration. Nothing could be more natural.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Since the original publication of the present article in 1948, a modification has been made in this system described by Dom Gajard. When the quarter-rest is used, according to the above principles, it is today thought of as falling before the bar, and so written in most cases. This makes it possible to end the first phrase with a silent thesis and begin the next with a sung arsis. In the rarer cases where the second phrase is so formed as to be best interpreted by **beginning** on a sung thesis, the quarter-rest is

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placed after the bar, so that the maxim of always beginning a phrase in arsis may be maintained by making an arsis on the silent quarter-rest.]

It is easily seen in the following example how, in spite of the identical melodic design, the slight inequality of length of the rest, wholly material, far from upsetting anything whatsoever, only assures the balance and harmony of the ensemble:

			12 12 1 2 12 3
Tract			
<i>Confitemini</i>	a)	judí-ci- um,	et fáci- unt
<i>Domino</i>			12 12 12 1 2 3
	b)	bó-nus :	quóni- am
			

One should not fear either that the pause of two simple counts in b) will introduce too long a silence. Just as the mediant in psalmody when it is well done, the rest here regulates the movement, gives an impression of security and peace, and the chant is maintained in an ease and suppleness nearly impossible otherwise. How many times have we had proof of this!

We think it wise to recommend this rhythmic principle of binary regularity during the rest for breathing at the end of phrases. It holds good normally for the full bars, for the beginning of the verses in the Graduals, Tracts, Alleluias, Responsories, and for the most part, also, for the change of choir, at the double bar, in the *Kyries*, *Glorias*, *Credos*, etc.

Once in a while it happens, however, that the full bar calls for a longer pause . . . when it closes not only a phrase, but also an important section of the whole piece. Let us cite as example the Offertory *Precatus est* of the Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost, which forms a real triptych: a very expressive prayer framed between two ornamental recitatives. It is clear that the two bars which close each of the two first

parts call for a treatment different from the usual, from that of the simple phrase endings. Another example in a much less ornate style may be found in the Communion *Dicit Dominus* of the Second Sunday after the Epiphany.

It would be best, then, to have bars of greater dimensions, but once more we cannot indicate everything. The art of music is far too spiritual to admit of imprisonment in material moulds. It is for the interpreter to understand, to feel and to express in the best way what the composer has put into the complexity of his creative work.

Thanks to the ensemble of these rules, the performance becomes not only a pleasure for the ear, but a joy to the spirit, providing, however, that the greater rhythm itself control all these separate sections, raise them and blend them in the over-all unity of the piece. That is the characteristic par excellence of the work of art.

Perhaps one day we may return to a discussion of that point.

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